

Message Text

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TAGS: PINT, BG

SUBJECT: CHAIRMAN MUJIB: THE NATIONAL PARTY IS ANNOUNCED

SUMMARY. FEBRUARY 23 PRESIDENT MUJIBUR RAHMAN DECREED THE FORMATION OF A SINGLE NATIONAL POLITICAL PARTY, TO BE CALLED THE BANGLADESH KRISHAK SRAMIK AWAMI LEAGUE (PEASANT-WORKERS PEOPLES LEAGUE). ALL OTHER PARTIES STAND DISSOLVED. MUJIB JUSTIFIED THIS STEP AS NECESSARY TO GIVE "FULL EFFECT TO THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF STATE POLICY...NATIONALISM, SOCIALISM, DEMOCRACY, AND SECULARISM." MUJIB WILL BE CHAIRMAN. ALL MPS OF DEFUNCT AWAMI LEAGUE AND ALL MINISTERS, STATE MINISTERS, AND DEPUTY MINISTERS ARE AUTOMATICALLY MEMBERS OF THE NEW PARTY UNLESS THE PRESIDENT DIRECTS OTHERWISE. END SUMMARY.

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1. IN THE LATE AFTERNOON OF FEBRUARY 23 PRESIDENT

MUJIBUR RAHMAN ISSUED THREE PRESIDENTIAL ORDERS ESTABLISHING A ONE PARTY STATE, AS PERMITTED UNDER THE RECENT CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS. THE ORDERS TAKE THE FOLLOWING PATTERN:

A. UNDER POWERS CONFERRED ON HIM BY CLAUSE 1 OF ARTICLE 117A OF THE CONSTITUTION THE PRESIDENT IS "PLEASED HEREBY TO DIRECT THAT THERE SHALL BE ONLY ONE POLITICAL PARTY IN THE STATE." THIS IS REQUIRED IN ORDER TO GIVE FULL EFFECT TO THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF THE STATE (NATIONALISM, SOCIALISM, DEMOCRACY, AND SECULARISM).

B. PER CLAUSES 2 AND 3 OF ARTICLE 117A, THE PRESIDENT "IS PLEASED TO FORM" A NATIONAL PARTY TO BE CALLED THE BANGLADESH KRISHAK SRAMIK AWAMI LEAGUE, WITH THE PRESIDENT AS CHAIRMAN. THE PRESIDENT SHALL TAKE ALL MEASURES NECESSARY FOR ITS ORGANIZATION AND ALL POWERS NECESSARY TO CONDUCT ITS AFFAIRS.

C. ALL MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT BELONGING TO THE "DEFUNCT" AWAMI LEAGUE AND MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS, MINISTERS OF STATE, AND DEPUTY MINISTERS "SHALL BE DEEMED" MEMBERS OF THE NEW LEAGUE "UNLESS OTHERWISE DIRECTED BY THE PRESIDENT." ALSO, UNTIL THE PRESIDENT ORGANIZES ZHNEW LEAGUE, ALL COMMITTEES OF ZHAWAMI LEAGUE EXCEPT FOR THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE, SHALL CONTINUE TO FUNCTION TEMPORARILY AS COMMITTEES OF THE NEW LEAGUE.

2. WITH ONE EXCEPTION, THERE HAS BEEN NO PUBLIC COMMENT YT ON THE ANNOUNCEMENT. THE BANGLADESH TIMES OF FEBRUARY 25 DOES REPORT THAT AN UNIDENTIFIED LEADER OF NATIONAL AWAMI PARTY/MUZAFFAR HAS CALLED THE PRESIDENT'S DECISION "CORRECT AND TIMELY." HE ALSO IS REPORTED TO HAVE SAID THAT NAP/M WOULD JOIN THE NATIONAL PARTY "SHORTLY" AND UNCONDITIONALLY.

3. OF SEVERAL EDITORIALS LAUDING ESTABLISHMENT OF A ONE PARTY STATE, THE MOST SIGNIFICANT WAS THE MORNING NEWS' COMMENT THAT PARTY MEMBERSHIP WILL BE "SUPREME IN REGARD TO PARTICIPATION IN LAW-MAKING PROCESSES AND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ADMINISTRATION PROCESSES." MORNING NEWS EMPHASIZED THAT IN A NEW "MONOLITHIC SYSTEM", NO ONE WOULD BE AN OUT-SIDER AND THAT MEMBERS OF TY BUREAUCRACY AND THE ARMED SERVICES, BY IMPLICATION TO BE MEMBERS OF THE PARTY, WOULD BE ABLE TO CONTRIBUTE FULLY TO THE GOALS OF THE NATION. ACCORDING TO THE MORNING NEWS, THE PARTY WOULD BE THE INSTRUMENT OF CHANGE IN SOCIETY AND "MEMBERSHIP WOULD MEAN THE HIGHEST HONOR ONE COULD GAIN IN THE SOCIETY

TO COME."

4. COMMENT. AS THE THIRD ORDER INDICATES, THE FIRST PRIORITY WILL BE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE. WE UNDERSTAND FROM SOURCES THAT THE POLITICAL STRUCTURE AT LOWER LEVELS WILL NOT BE KMGED FOR THE TIME BEING. THE AWAMI LEAGUE ORGANIZATION WILL CONTINUE IN EFFECT, ALTHOUGH TECHNICALLY THE RANK AND FILE NO LONGER EXISTS; MEMBERSHIP IN THE KSAL HAS BEEN GIVEN FOR NOW ONLY TO PARLIAMENTARIANS AND MINISTERS. CALLS FOR NATIONAL UNITY AND MASS COOPERATION NOTWITHSTANDING, INDICATIONS SO FAR SUGGEST THAT THE NEW PARTY WILL BE ELITIST IN CHARACTER. OUR VIEW IS REINFORCED NOT ONLY BY REPORTS THAT THERE WILL BE VARYING LEVELS OF MEMBERSHIP BUT ALSO BY THE MORNING NEWS' EMPHASIS UPON THE HIGH HONOR THAT MEMBERSHIP WILL CONFER.

BOSTER

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